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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/653,520	09/02/2003	Jonathon L. Kimmel	00138CIPCON(3600-360-01)	3339

7590 08/30/2004
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EXAMINER

MAI, NGOCLAN THI

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1742

DATE MAILED: 08/30/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/653,520

Applicant(s)

KIMMEL ET AL.

Examiner

Ngoclan T. Mai

Art Unit

1742

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 28-112 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 38-43, 47-55 and 86-112 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 28-37, 44-46 and 56-85 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

2. The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

3. Claims 28-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Clarke (US 5,173,215)

Clark discloses conductive titanium suboxide particulates that meet the limitation “oxygen-reduced valve metal oxide” of claim 27 produced by crushing and grinding solid ceramic tile to an average particle size of 5 microns. See col. 7, lines 4-40. Clark also discloses particulate composition which includes particle sizes of about one micron or

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larger in diameter and surface area may be 1.0 m²/g or even greater. See col. 9, lines 22-27.

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 28-37, 44-46 and 56-85 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fife (US 6,391,275).

Fife disclosed a reduced niobium oxide having a microporous surface and primary particle size of 1 micron or less, see col. 3, line 66 to col. 4, line 2. Fife also discloses the limitations of claims 29-37 in col. 4, lines 7-48.

The difference between the powder taught by Fife and claim is that Fife does not teach powder having particle size of 1 to 10.5 microns.

However since Fife teaches the reduced niobium oxide powder whose primary particle size ranges overlap those recited by the claims; such overlapping range renders applicant's composition prima facie obvious despite difference in non-overlapping areas, see *In re Malagari*, 499 F.2d 1297, 1303, 182 USPQ 549, 553 (CCPA 1974).

Furthermore, in view of the overlapping in composition, the composition taught by the prior art would be expected to possess the same properties of applicant's powder having flow velocity of claims 44-46. See *In re Best*, 195 USPQ 430.

To distinguish over prior art, applicant needs to demonstrate (e.g. by comparative test data) that the more narrowly claimed ranges for the alloying constituents are somehow critical and productive of new and unexpected results.

6. Claims 38-43, 47-55 and 86-112 are allowable because none of prior art teaches agglomerated oxygen-reduced valve metal oxide having the claimed agglomerated size and flow velocity or agglomerated oxygen-reduced valve metal oxide powder coated with at least one additive.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ngoclan T. Mai whose telephone number is (571) 272-1246. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30-4:00 PM Monday-Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy King can be reached on (571) 272-1244. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Ngoclan Mai
NGOCLAN MAI
PRIMARY EXAMINER